CEO AI BRIEFING · SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

9 High-Impact AI Use Cases You Are Ignoring

(And the 9 You Are Wasting Time On)

Hannah Eisenberg · CEO & Founder, TrustLeader

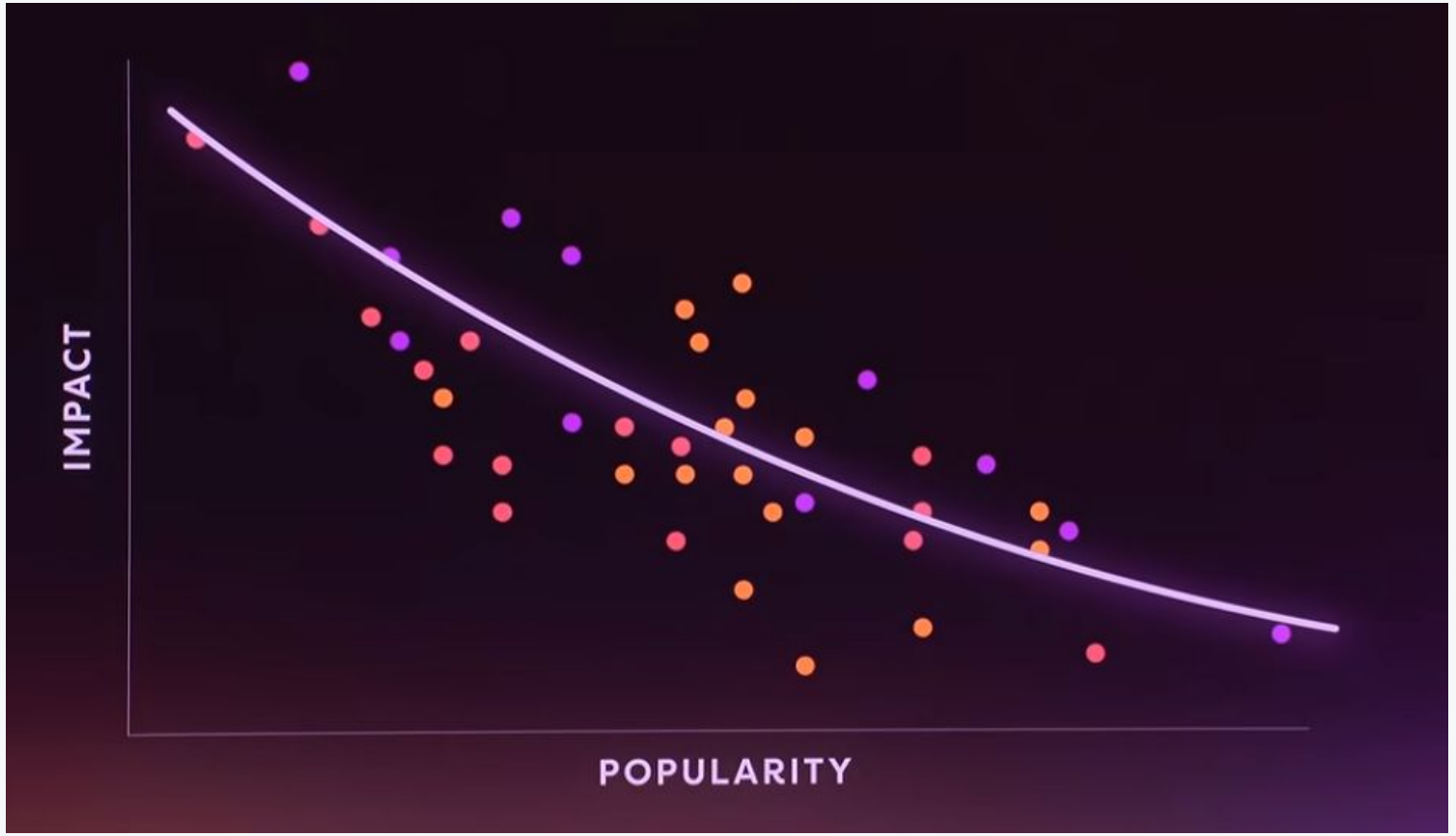
HubSpot studied 6,000 customers and 50 use cases

6,000+
customers surveyed, plus analysis of their AI usage

90%
use AI in some form

6%
see transformational results

For each of 50 use cases, HubSpot measured how popular it is and how much it moves the bottom line.



Source: HubSpot, UNBOUND 2026 keynote (Yamini Rangan, Sep 16, 2026)

The 9 most common AI use cases

DEMAND GENERATION	WINNING DEALS	DELIGHTING CUSTOMERS
Creating content	Sending sales emails	Preparing meetings and follow-ups
Updating content	Planning resources	Driving renewals and upsells
Researching your market or competition	Finding decision makers	Sending personalized emails

What do all of these have in common?

Source: HubSpot, UNBOUND 2026 keynote (Yamini Rangan, Sep 16, 2026)

Lots of writing, lots of responding, always a human in the loop

1 · HUMAN

Writes a prompt

Asks the AI for a draft: an article, an email, a meeting prep.

2 · AI

Judges and delivers

Collects what context it can, decides what good looks like, produces a result.

3 · HUMAN

Checks and reworks

Passes judgment on the AI's judgment. Tweaks, rewrites, then publishes or sends.

- Measured by activity: articles published, emails sent
- No defined standard: what good looks like is one person's opinion
- Failure is cheap: a bad draft just gets rewritten

What is a low-value use case?

DEFINITION

A use case where AI makes the judgment call and a human has to check and rework it, every time.

It tolerates thin context, because the human makes up for whatever the AI does not know.

THE CONSEQUENCE

The human ceiling

Output can only grow as fast as the number of people reviewing it.

Gains stay linear: efficiency and productivity. You automate a process, but you do not transform or scale it.

The 9 highest-impact AI use cases

DEMAND GENERATION	WINNING DEALS	DELIGHTING CUSTOMERS
Analyzing campaigns	Prioritizing pipeline	Analyzing customer feedback
Capturing leads	Flagging at-risk deals	Resolving tickets
Optimizing for conversions	Scoring leads	Managing offboarding

Same question: what do these have in common?

Source: HubSpot, UNBOUND 2026 keynote (Yamini Rangan, Sep 16, 2026)

Every one of them runs on a definition

At-risk deal. Priority lead. Resolved ticket. Offboarding managed. Each one is a written standard, a definition or a guardrail that the company decided on first.
AI does not decide what good looks like. It applies the standard, with no person in between.

There is a checkable right answer: the deal was at risk or it was not. So the standard can be measured and improved.

HUMAN

Decides the standard once, then reviews outcomes and refines it

AI

Applies that decision to every case, at volume

WHAT IS A HIGH-VALUE USE CASE?

A well-defined judgment, applied at scale.

The human decides once. AI applies it on every case. Returns grow with volume, not headcount.

Ten thousand leads, scored on one decision.

The difference between the two is context

HUBSPOT DEFINES IT AS

A dynamic knowledge of your business, your customers and your team.

HOW WE DEFINE IT

Everything AI must know to act like you: your standards, definitions, guardrails and judgment, written down.

Context is not an input that improves the task. It is the prerequisite to the task.

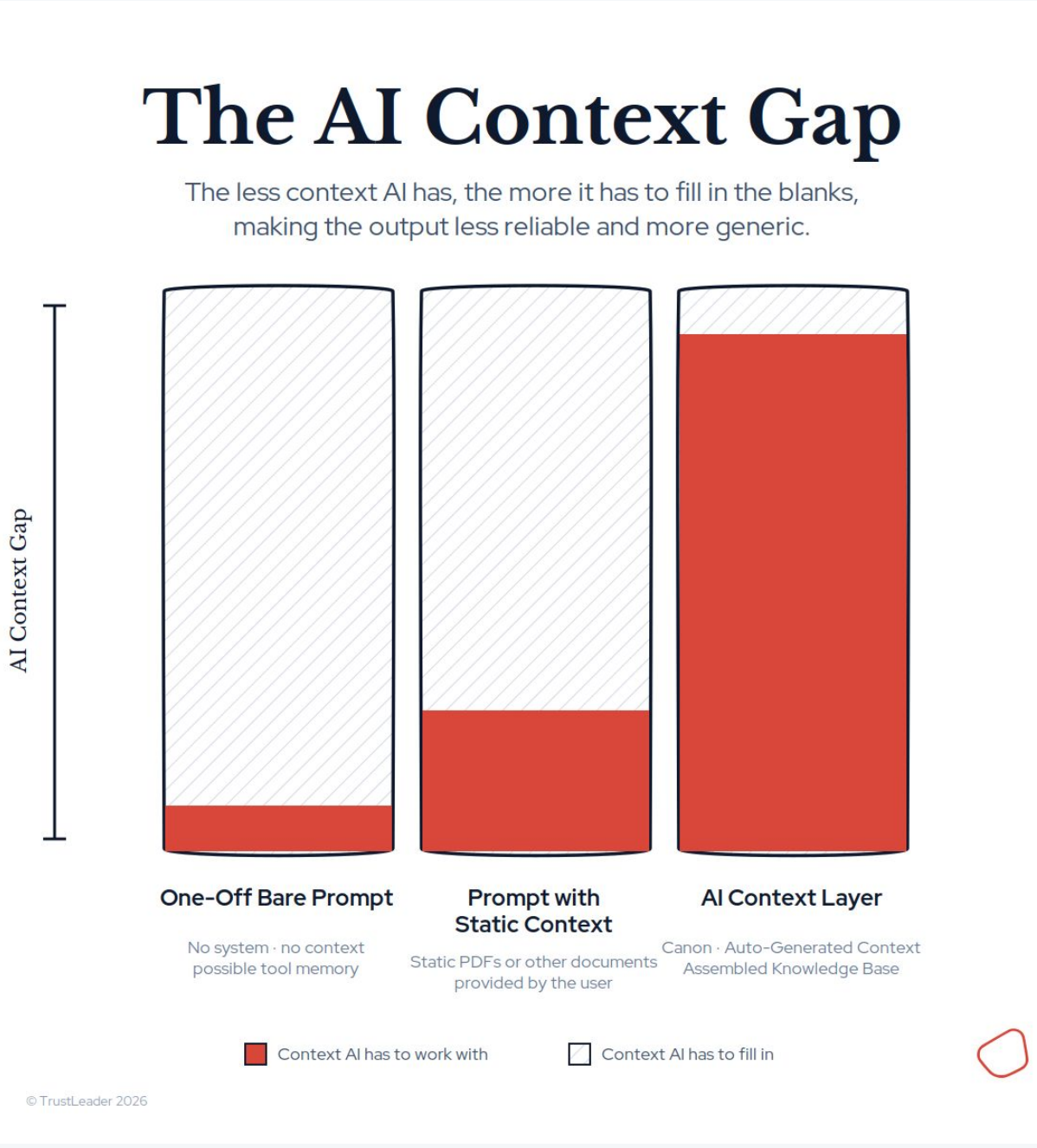
Someone has to sit down, draw a line, and decide what counts as an MQL, who fits your ideal customer, and what you will never do.

The AI Context Gap

The judgment, the standards and the definitions live in your head and your habits.

AI cannot see them. So it guesses, and a human has to judge the guess at every step.

That gap is what keeps you in low-value use cases.



Context is the pivot

LOW VALUE

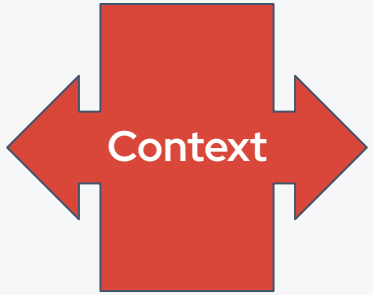
Human ceiling

AI guesses

A human checks and reworks

Linear gains

Scales with headcount



HIGH VALUE

AI at scale

AI applies your decisions

A human sets the standard

Gains scale with volume

No human ceiling

What good context looks like

Standards

What good looks like, stated so precisely that a result can be checked against it.

Definitions

What an MQL is versus an SQL. Who fits your ideal customer and who does not.

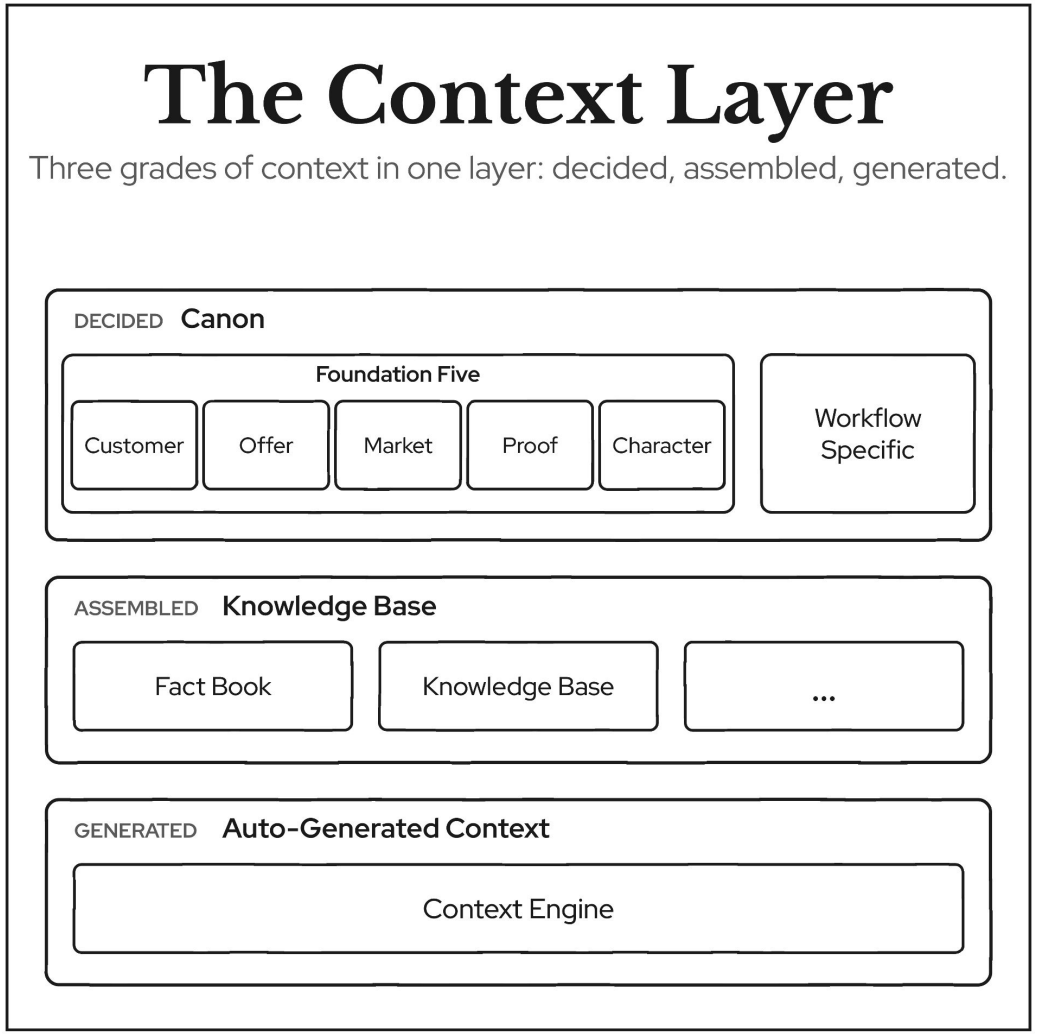
Guardrails

What AI must never do, and where a human always decides.

Judgment

The calls only you can make, decided once and written down.

The result: AI executes your decisions instead of guessing at them.



WHY BAD CONTEXT IS THE REAL RISK

Bad context is worse than no AI.

Yamini Rangan, HubSpot CEO, UNBOUND 2026

Outdated information on your website

AI fills the gaps when it cannot find the answer

Every team feeds it a different version of the truth

What good context delivers

BUILD DEMAND

+264% MQLs generated

+174% Marketing email replies

+110% Marketing-influenced deals created

WIN DEALS

+224% Deals closed

+197% Deals closed won

+194% Deals created

DELIGHT CUSTOMERS

+168% Connected customer calls

+200% Customer meetings booked

+107% Tickets closed

Bad context is worse than no AI at all.

Companies using AI with good context. Source: HubSpot Spotlight, UNBOUND 2026 (keynote slide, Sep 16, 2026)



Source: HubSpot, UNBOUND 2026 keynote (Yamini Rangan, Sep 16, 2026)

Three questions to test any use case

1 **Can we write down what good looks like?**
Is the judgment already a standard, a definition or a guardrail?

2 **Is there a checkable right answer?**
Was the deal at risk or not? Can the standard be measured against outcomes?

3 **Does the return scale with volume or with headcount?**
If a person must review each output, you are under the human ceiling.

Three yeses: a high-value use case. Any no: linear gains.

The Lane Test: which lane does each step belong in?

Human

A person keeps the step

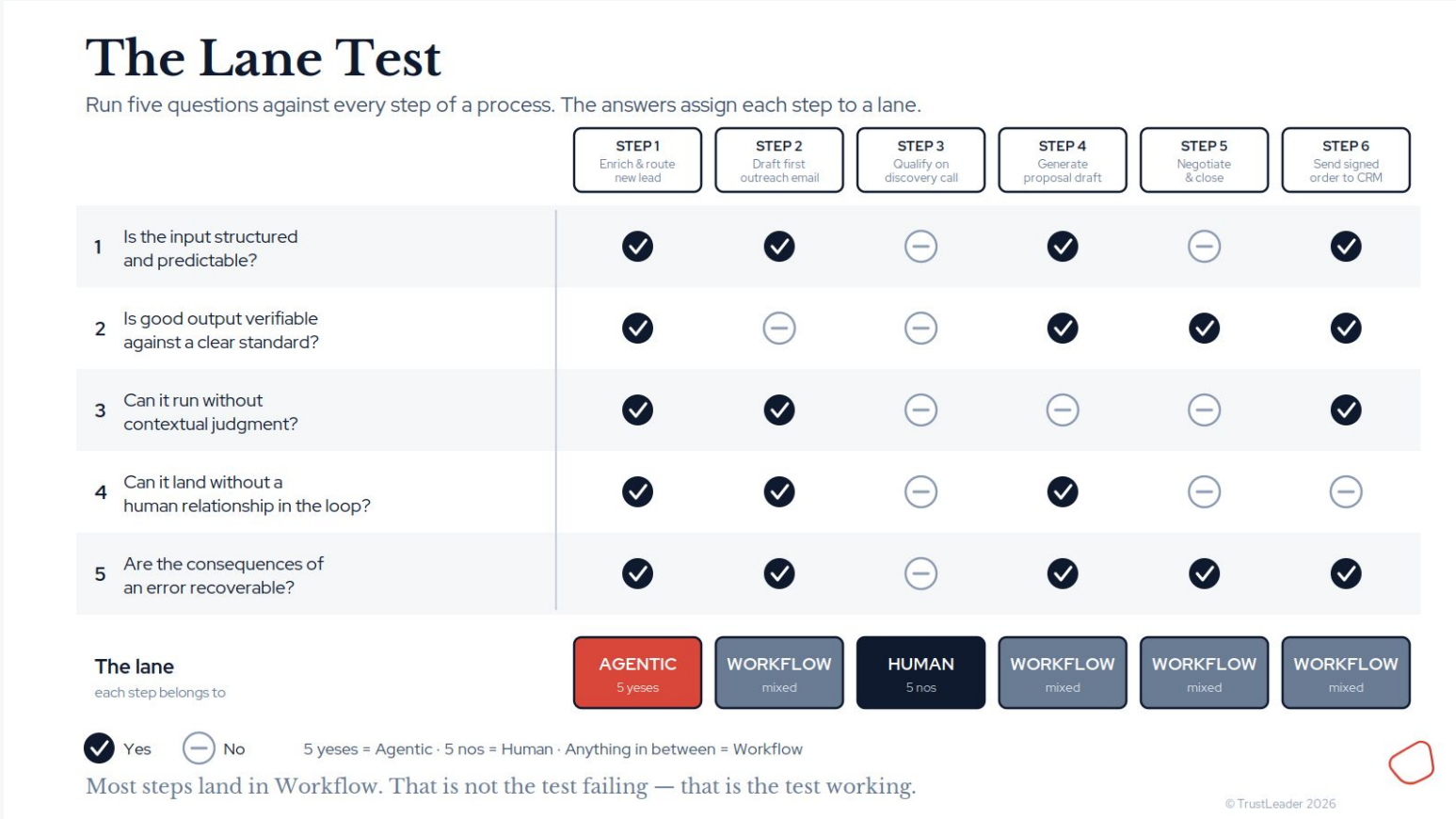
Workflow

A fixed sequence runs the step

Agent

AI carries out the step

Five yes/no questions, asked at the step level, not the process level.



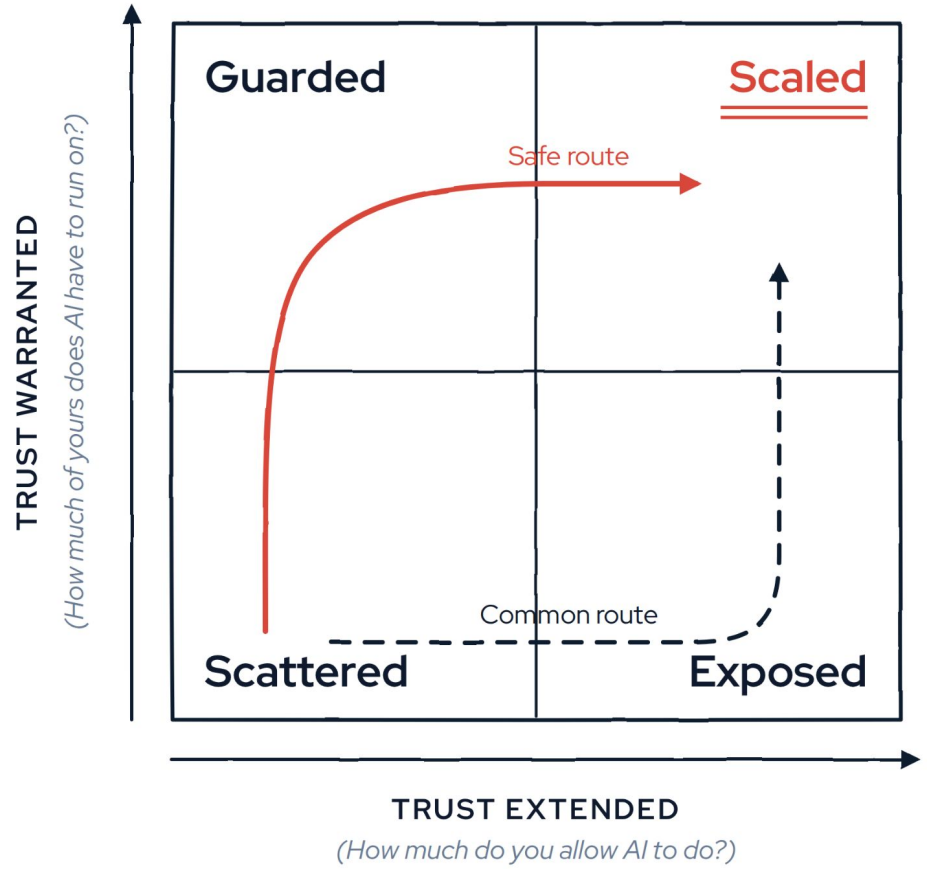
Earn the trust first

You cannot skip ahead. Trust in AI is earned step by step, then extended.

Which path is the safe path, and which is the good path?

The Scattered to Scaled Trust Matrix

What you let AI do, against how much of yours it has to run on.
The safe route builds the foundation first, then extends trust.



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SCATTERED TO SCALED AI SCORECARD

Where does your company stand?

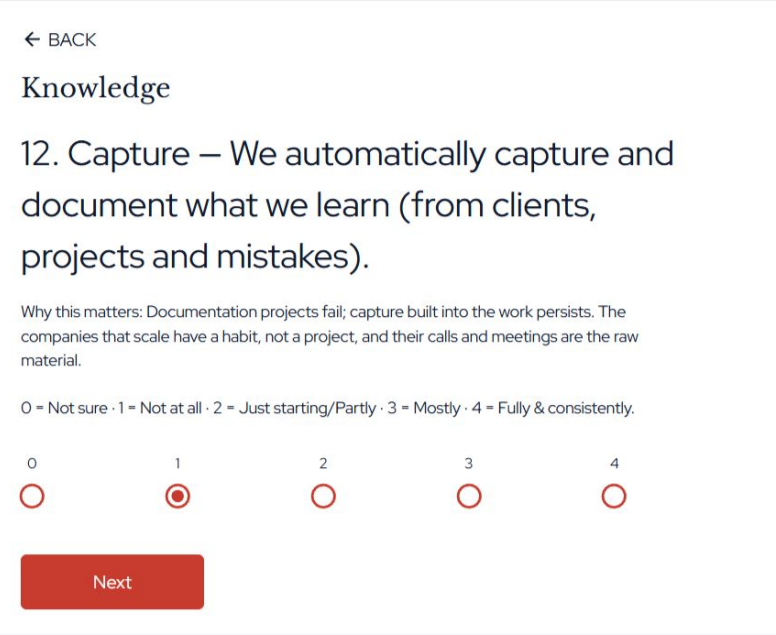
7 Pillars | 36 Statements | 10 Minutes | Instant Results | Free to Take

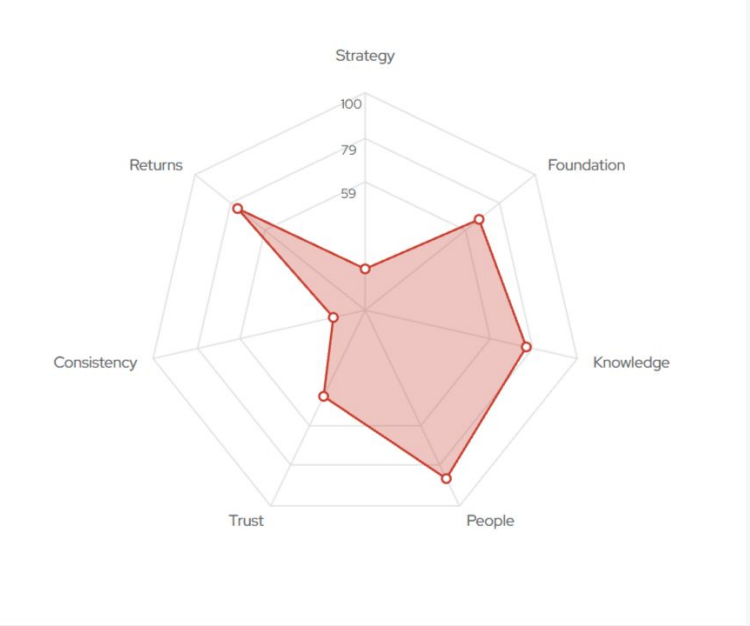
- Benchmark your team's readiness across all 7 context pillars in under 10 minutes
- Instant, personalized report with your strengths, vulnerabilities and next best steps
- Free for CEOs and their teams
- Compare results: see where your answers differ, and where your context layer is strong or needs work

Scan to take the Scorecard

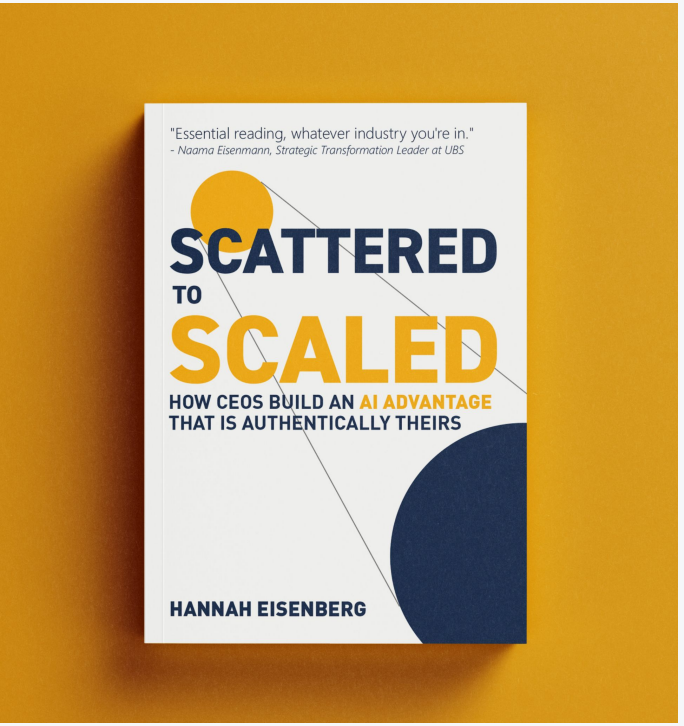
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FROM SCATTERED TO SCALED

What changes when you get it right

BEFORE

Every department feeding AI a different version of the truth

Rework and confusion

AFTER

One context layer, built once

Clarity and momentum. Results did not just improve, they compounded.

One CEO thought their AI was advanced, but every department was feeding it a different version of the truth.
When we built their context layer, their team moved from rework and confusion to clarity and momentum.

Your clarity starts now. Take the Scorecard. Pre-order the book. Let's build your context layer together.